

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, New York

DATE: February 7, 1946

FROM : John Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

SUBJECT: ALBERT CANUS, with alias P. F. Corus
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

Indexed

The above captioned individual is reportedly the New York correspondent of "Combat" (a newspaper in Paris, France.) This individual has been filing inaccurate reports which are unfavorable to the public interest of this country, according to the State Department.

The Bureau indices reflect that in March of 1945 Canus was listed as editor-in-chief of "Combat" by the Interdepartmental Committee for Accusation of Foreign Publications. A confidential source further indicated Canus was on a committee in France which met to form a European Federation Unit of the Movement for Socialism and Liberty. The delegates were representatives of unions in the resistance movements in France.

The New York City Field Division is requested to definitely establish that Canus is in this country and to conduct a preliminary investigation in an effort to ascertain his background, activities and affiliations in this country.

A copy of this letter is being furnished to the Washington Field Division in order that an examination of the State Department's records, in particular the Visa Section, may be made in regard to Canus. The Washington Field Division is requested to furnish the Bureau and the New York Field Division with all available information as soon as possible.

It is requested that this matter be given expeditious attention.

cc - Washington

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Indexed

Filed

2/12/46
Check against 105
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| 123-1710-1 | |
| F. B. I. | |
| ① | FEB 11 1946 |
| N. Y. C. | |
| [Redacted Box] | |

DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FEBRUARY 15, 1946

GUY HOTTEL, SAC, WASHINGTON FIELD

ALBERT CANUS, alias, P. F. Corns
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

Reference is made to Bureau letter dated February 7, 1946, requesting that the records of the State Department be checked for any information concerning the above entitled individual who is reportedly the New York correspondent for the French newspaper, COMBAT.

This is to advise that Confidential National Defense Informant [] whose identity is known to the Bureau, advised that a check of the records of the General Files of the State Department failed to reflect any information on either ALBERT CANUS or P. F. CORNUS. Confidential National Defense Informant [] also made a check with the Visa Division of the State Department which check was made with negative results.

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Accordingly, in view of this information, no further inquiry is being made by this office, and the case is being REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN.

ECK:cw
77-18333

cc: New York

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Serialized _____
Indexed _____
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105-140-2

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SAC, Washington Field

February 25, 1946

SAC, New York

JOSEPH CANUS, with aliases; P. F. Byrne, Albert Cohen
INTERNAL SECURITY - R. RE-ENTRY

Reference is made to Bureau letter dated February 7, 1946.

It is requested that a note be placed on the entry of subject into the United States with the N. Y. Boston Bureau. No additional descriptive or background information is available other than is contained in reference letter, that subject is expected to enter the United States sometime in March 1946.

For the information of receiving offices, who are being requested to place stops at their local ports of entry, subject is reportedly the New York correspondent of "Combat" (a newspaper in Paris, France). He has been filing inaccurate reports which are unfavorable to the public interest of this country according to the State Department.

In March of 1945 he was listed as editor-in-chief of "Combat" by the Interdepartmental Committee for Accusations of Foreign Publications. A confidential source has advised the Bureau that CANUS was on a committee in France which met to form a European Federation Unit of the Movement for Socialism and Liberty. The delegates were representatives of unions in the resistance movements in France.

The Bureau desires that subject's presence in this country be definitely established and a preliminary investigation be conducted to ascertain his background, activities and affiliations in this country. All offices are being requested if subject enters their local port, to ascertain whatever information they may be able to, in accordance with Bureau instructions.

cc - Newark
Boston
Philadelphia
Baltimore
New Orleans
Miami
Norfolk
El Paso

Dallas
San Antonio
Los Angeles
San Francisco

WJH:W
NY 105-960

105-960-3

234 U. S. Court House
Foley Square
New York 7, N. Y.

February 28, 1946

[redacted]
Collector, U. S. Customs Service
Customs House
New York 4, N. Y.

Attention: [redacted]
Assistant Collector

Dear Sir:

Re: ALBERT CANUS, with aliases:
Albert Canus, P. F. Corus

Reference is made to the telephonic communication on February 28, 1946, from our office to the office of the Collector of Customs requesting that a stop be placed against the entry of the above-named individual into the Port of New York.

This individual, as our request indicated, is either New York correspondent or editor of "Combat," the Paris, France, newspaper. He will arrive some time in March, 1946.

I wish to confirm this request at this time and to thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Very truly yours,

H
E. E. CONROY,
Special Agent in Charge

JET:RAA
105-960

105-960

DIRECTOR



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.



IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO
FILE NUMBER _____

March 14, 1946

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO: COLLECTORS OF CUSTOMS

SUBJECT: ALBERT CANUS, with aliases: *105-960*
P. F. CORUS, ALBERT CAMUS

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, is interested in Albert Canus, who is expected to enter the United States sometime in March 1946. No description of Canus is available.

In the event this individual attempts to enter into a port in your district, it would be appreciated if you will notify by telephone, collect, the nearest Field Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and at the same time notify that office that the New York Field Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is particularly interested in Albert Canus.

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover
Director

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Searched -
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105-960-5

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|-------------|---------------|
| F. B. I. | |
| MAR 20 1946 | |
| N. Y. C. | |
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Lee

cc NYe

Roc by W. 70

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

NO FILE NO.

105-267

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|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| REPORT MADE AT NEW ORLEANS, LA. | DATE WHEN MADE 3/18/46 | PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 3/8, 11/46 | REPORT MADE BY <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> |
| TITLE ALBERT CAMUS, was: P.F. COMUS, Albert Camus | | | CHARACTER OF CASE SPECIAL INQUIRY-STATE DEPT. TRAVEL |

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SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: No record of subject's entry at New Orleans, since 2/1/46. Local stops placed with Customs and Immigration, New Orleans.

- RUC -

REFERENCE: New York letter to Washington Field, February 25, 1946.

DETAILS: At New Orleans, Louisiana:

At the Record, Room, Immigration and Naturalization Service, a check was made by the writer of all incoming ship and plane passenger manifests since February 1, 1946, under subject's name and aliases with negative results.

made a check of Immigration indices under subject's name and aliases with negative results, but did locate file 7000/1566 under the name of

This file reflected that

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Inasmuch as no description of subject COMUS is available, it is not known whether

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|--|
| APPROVED AND FORWARDED: | SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE | DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES | |
| COPIES OF THIS REPORT 5 - Bureau 2 - New York 2 - New Orleans | | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">MAR 25 1946</div> | Searched Serialized Indexed Filed |
| | | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div> | |

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Handwritten signature and date

NO 105-287

CARD might be identical, and no further action is being taken along this line.

b7C A stop notice was placed with [redacted] Secretary to the Officer in Charge, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and with Agent [redacted] Customs Agency Service, to notify this office in the event of arrival of anyone under subject's name or aliases.

~~REMOVED~~ UPON COMPLETION TO THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN-

NO 105-287

UNDEVELOPED LEADS

THE NEW YORK FIELD DIVISION

AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK:

Upon the entry of subject, will notify the New Orleans Field Division, in order that the local stops with Customs and Immigration may be cancelled.

Washington Field

March 25, 1946

SAC, New York

ALBERT CANUS, with aliases: Albert CANUS, P. F. Corns;
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

Reference is made to the letter from the New York Field Division to the Washington Field Division, dated February 25, 1946.

It is hereby requested that all stops placed on the entry of the subject into the United States with the United States Customs Service be hereby removed.

It has been ascertained through the stop placed with the United States Customs Service in New York City that the subject arrived in the United States on March 25, 1946 at New York City, aboard the SS RECON.

cc Newark
Boston
Philadelphia
Baltimore
New Orleans
Miami

Dallas
Norfolk
El Paso
San Antonio
Los Angeles
San Francisco

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JET:KXW
105-960

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hac

105-960-7

March 25, 1946

The Surveyor of Customs
New York 4, N.Y.

Sir:

In reference to Assistant Collector [redacted]
[redacted] letter of March 1, 1946, regarding
Albert Camus:

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Albert Camus arrived March 25, 1946 on
S/S OREGON at Pier 86 N.R., Declaration 486923.

F.B.I. Agent [redacted] was contacted and he
asked that we get Camus' United States address,
and give the same to F.B.I. Agent [redacted]

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Inspector [redacted] gave Camus' baggage
a thorough examination, finding nothing unde-
clared.

The U.S. address given was 36 Gramercy Park,
c/o Guideret, New York City. Camus was a non-
resident and his French address was 17 de
universite St. Paris, France.

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This information was given to F.B.I. Agent
[redacted]

Respectfully

ADW:HL

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[redacted]
Deputy Surveyor
Baggage Division

MAR 29 1946
N.Y.C.

[redacted]
105-960-8

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

per

TO : SAC, New York

FROM : John Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

SUBJECT: ALBERT CANUS, with alias P. F. Coors
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

105-1960

Send file

DATE: March 29, 1946

Reference is made to my letter dated February 7, 1946, concerning the above-captioned individual.

It is requested that your office expedite the investigation and submit a report to the Bureau in the immediate future.

Handwritten signature

Searched
Serialized
Indexed
Filed

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|--------------|
| 76-70 |
| FBI |
| APR 3 - 1946 |
| FILE |

[Redacted box]

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **NEW YORK**

NY FILE NO **105-960 MIN**

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|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| REPORT MADE AT NEW YORK | DATE WHEN MADE 4/1/46 | PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 2/15; 3/11, 12, 15, 23/46 | REPORT MADE BY <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> |
| TITLE ALBERT CAMUS, with aliases: Albert Camus, P. F. Corus | | | CHARACTER OF CASE SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT |
| <p>SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Subject born 1913, Algiers, N. Africa, where he was newspaperman and maritime broker. Left Africa in 1940 because of ill health for Paris. Associated with "COMBAT" and resistance movement until recently. Is writer of austerity plays. Will give symposium on "The Crisis of Man" and is believed to be sponsored by French cultural society in Paris on lectures to be given here. Political philosophy has been described by informant as moderate, "middle of the road." Informant states after the liberation subject's organization did not join any recognized political party but individual members returned to their respective political parties. Few remained with subject with no definite objective. Information developed subject's philosophy, plays and resistance movement tended to bear more towards Communism than towards Socialism. One of sponsors for symposium described as noted painter and admirer of PICASSO, possibly Communist Party member. One informant believes subject is not Communist and that Communist movement in France is tending to become more nationalistically inclined since liberation. Subject arrived in US on 3/25/46 aboard SS OREGON. Stops placed with US Customs Service and removed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- P -</p> <p>REFERENCE: Bureau letter 2/7/46, entitled ALBERT CAMUS, with alias: P. F. Corus</p> | | | |
| APPROVED AND FORWARDED <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> | SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE | DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES <div style="font-size: 2em; margin-top: 10px;">105 11 11/46</div> | |
| COPIES OF THIS REPORT 5 - Bureau 3 - New York | | | |

NY 105-960

DETAILS:

The investigation in the instant case is predicated upon the referenced Bureau letter.

Confidential Informant [] whose identity is known to the Bureau, advised that the subject's group in the resistance movement was formed originally of individuals of all political philosophies in order to form resistance against the German invaders. He stated that when liberation came, the objective of the group was gone and the group disintegrated. The individuals belonging to the group went back to their respective political parties and philosophies, for example Communism, Socialism, etc.

He related that those who formed an intimate friendship with the subject during the resistance movement remained with him as a group but probably will disintegrate inasmuch as the objective for which they were formed no longer exists and they are a group only because of their friendship with the subject.

This informant revealed he does not know the political philosophy of those who remained with the subject nor does he know the subject's beliefs.

This informant advised that the subject was not in the United States at the present time but he believed he was coming here some time in March of 1946 and that while in Paris he was associated with the newspaper "COMBAT", an influential paper which was published by the French underground during the occupation.

Confidential Informant [] advised that the subject, whose true name is AIBERT CAMUS, not AIBERT CANUS, is a well known newspaperman in France. He believes the subject is not a Communist and does not definitely know his political philosophy. He advised that the subject was not coming here under the auspices of the French Institute but could not come here, however, other than through the benediction of the French Government. The informant has been advised by the French Embassy Service that the subject is coming to the United States and, according to his belief, will be proposed as a lecturer.

He believes that because of the subject's importance as a newspaperman, he will create a great deal of interest and be much sought after when he arrives in the United States.

NY 105-960

In discussing the subject, the informant began talking about Communism and stated he has ascertained from political observers and others that the Communist movement in France has undergone a great change. The tendency of this group is to "cut loose" from Russia and to sway toward a more nationalistic body. He stated that the subject, whom he believes is not a Communist but who has Communistic tendencies, would possibly have sentiments similar to this group.

He went on to say he never heard of the subject under the name of CORUS but the French often used pen names and possibly CORUS is the subject's pen name. He revealed that it is often hard to believe allegations of any kind concerning individuals who are Frenchmen in view of the fact that the French, as a race, often intend to discredit others in their same field, such as a Communist and a Jew, and thereby attach a derogatory reputation to an individual.

He stated that many Frenchmen have been arriving in the United States and they have individuals residing here who are, in fact, their enemies and who would do anything to discredit or hurt them.

He gave the following background information concerning the subject:

He revealed the subject was born in Algiers in 1913 and resided there until 1940, being employed as a newspaperman and maritime broker. In 1940, due to ill health, he traveled to Paris, France, where he became engaged in journalism, literature and, finally, the resistance movement. He revealed the subject was associated with "COMBAT", a leading newspaper in France and that he wrote many leading editorials and was connected with this paper until he resigned a few months ago. He has also written a number of plays, the most important of which is called "CALIGULA" and a number of essays which will probably become famous.

The subject will arrive in the United States sometime in March, sponsored by the French Cultural Service, and will give a symposium on March 28, 1946 at Columbia University together with Lieutenant THIMERAIS, F. F. I., and connected with "MINUTE EDITIONS" and the "MIDNIGHT CHRONICLES", formerly published in France. Also taking part in the symposium will be VERGORS. These three individuals are under the chairmanship of [redacted] who is a professor of French literature at Columbia University.

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NY 105-960

b7C The informant revealed that Professor [redacted] was associated with the Office of Strategic Services during the war and, while stationed in Paris, came to know the subject quite well. He stated that he has collaborated in at least one article with him in the past.

The informant advised that in the February 23rd, 1946 issue of "THE NATION" there was an article entitled: "FRENCH EXISTENTIALISM" by HANNAH ARENDT and this article was written concerning the subject and one JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. This article was obtained by the writer and the following information extracted therefrom:

The article concerns a new movement in France called "EXISTENTIALISM" whose chief exponents are the subject and JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. This movement is explained in the article by stating;

"The French Existentialists, though they differ widely among themselves, are united on two main lines of rebellion: first, the rigorous repudiation of what they call the 'esprit serieux' and second, the angry refusal to accept the world as it is as the natural, predestined milieu of man.

"L'esprit serieux, which is the original sin according to the new philosophy, may be equated with respectability. The 'serious' man is one who thinks of himself as president of his business, as a member of the Legion of Honor, as a member of the faculty, but also as father, as husband, or as any other half-natural, half-social function. For by so doing he agrees to the identification of himself with an arbitrary function which society has bestowed. 'L'esprit serieux' is the very negation of freedom, because it leads man to agree to and accept the necessary deformation which every human being must undergo when he is fitted into society. Since everyone knows well enough in his own heart that he is not identical with his function, 'L'esprit serieux' indicates also bad faith in the sense of pretending. The way out of pretense and serious-mindedness is to play at being what one really is.

"By playing at what one is, one guards one's freedom as a human being from the pretenses of one's functions; moreover, only by playing at what he really is, is man able to affirm that he is never identical with himself as a thing is identical with itself. An inkpot is always an inkpot. Man is his life and his actions, which are never finished until the very moment of his death. He is his existence."

NY 105-960

"The second common element of French Existentialism, the insistence upon the basic homelessness of man in the world, is the topic of Camus' 'Le Mythe de Sisyphe; essay l'absurde,' and of Sartre's 'La Nausee.' For Camus man is essentially the stranger because the world in general and man as man are not fitted for each other; that they are together in existence makes the human condition an absurdity. Man is the only 'thing' in the world which obviously does not belong in it, for only man does not exist simply as a man among men in the way animals exist among animals and trees among trees—all of which necessarily exist, so to speak, in the plural. Man is basically alone with his 'revolt' and his 'clairvoyance', that is, with his reasoning, which makes him ridiculous because the gift of reason was bestowed upon him in a world 'where everything is given and nothing ever explained.'

"Camus has probably protested against being called an Existentialist because for him the absurdity does not lie in man as such or in the world as such but only in their being thrown together. Since man's life, being laid in the world, is absurd, it must be lived as absurdity—lived, that is, in a kind of proud defiance which insists on reason despite the experience of reason's failure to explain anything; insists on despair since man's pride will not allow him the hope of discovering a sense he cannot figure out by means of reason; insists, finally, that reason and human dignity, in spite of their senselessness, remain the supreme values. The absurd life then consists in constantly rebelling against all its conditions and in constantly refusing consolations. 'This revolt is the price of life. Spread over the whole of an existence, it restores its grandeur.'"

The above article has been extracted from the copy of "THE NATION" and is being made a part of the New York file.

Confidential Informant [redacted] whose identity is known to the Bureau, stated that he contacted [redacted] of "FRANCE AMERIQUE", a French publication in New York City, who advised him that the subject's correct name is ALBERT CAMUS. [redacted] arrived in the United States from France over two months ago and stated that while there he knew the subject, whom he believed was born in North Africa. He stated that the subject is slightly tubercular and is a writer of austerity plays, for example "CALIGULA".

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NY 105-960

[] told the informant that the subject was an active correspondent of "COMBAT" and an intimate of [] who is presently lecturing in New York City. He stated that CAMUS is due here approximately March 27, 1946 to give a lecture entitled "THE CRISIS OF MAN" on March 28, 1946 at a conference which will be held at Columbia University, New York City.

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He revealed that one of the subject's associates is a Mr. VERCORS, who is considered a famous artist in the world of painters and artists. According to the informant, VERCORS is an admirer of PICASSO, who is a leader in the new school of thought for modern artists. The informant advised that PICASSO tends to bear "to the left" and, according to the informant's belief, is a member of the Communist Party.

The informant stated that he learned from [] that the subject's philosophy and those in the resistance movement also bears towards the left and it is closer to Communism than towards the philosophy advanced by the Socialists. He stated that the type of play written by the subject also tends to bear out this philosophy.

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This informant gave the reporting agent an article which he had cut out of "FRANCE AMERIQUE" and, although he did not recall the date of issue, he stated that it was of recent origin. This article was written in the French language and is translated as follows:

"THEATER BORN OF THE WAR"

"New tendencies in the French theater"—this was the title of the brilliant lecture given by Mr. Jean Sartre under the auspices of the American magazine "View" to a large and select audience.

"Basing himself on the work of Jean Anouilh, Simone de Beauvoir and Albert Camus, he summed up the present tendencies in our postwar theater, which has become a 'theater of austerity' as contrasted with the 'luxury theater' of 1939. The stage director merely tells people where to stand. The author does not study 'characters', but rather 'situations', and the reactions of a free man facing a determined situation in the world. With each one of the authors, there is always the drama of a choice from a moral aspect, and generally a conflict of systems. Their aim is to establish a unity among the spectators, keeping them at a distance all the while, to present problems as myths, whence comes their fondness for ancient subjects. The common ordinary, every-day language which they use is expressed with a strict economy of words; this makes translation difficult, but it gives that impression of aloofness which has been sought."

NY 105-960

"Theater of situations and of free choice, theater of catastrophes, short plays where the three unities are respected and where the number of characters corresponds to the number of conflicts which have arisen.

"These new tendencies in the French theater are due to the social conditions. The result of the occupation and the need for economy have made themselves felt even in literary phenomena.

"'Strictly Private', the author of which is the lecturer and to which he made but a modest reference, is also a play characteristic of the genre. In Paris it was received with a success which is equal to that of 'Antigone' of Anouilh. It is to be presented on Broadway at the end of this year. Let us hope that Mr. J. P. Sartre will be better understood by the Americans than his colleague was.

/s/....J. G."

Confidential Informant [] related that he had contacted a number of individuals with whom he was intimate in French circles in New York City and he had ascertained that the subject's paper is a moderate paper and that the subject, himself, is moderate in his philosophy. He stated that he tends to take a "middle of the road" way of thinking but is both anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist. The informant stated that while in France, the subject was pro-De Gaullist but never was violent in asserting his political beliefs. He also had a very high reputation while in France as a writer of excellent editorials, and as a writer of very good plays.

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Special Agent [] ascertained that in the issue of "The New York Times" for February 9, 1946, an article appeared which related that the subject's play "CALIGULA", which is playing to capacity audiences in Paris, has been acquired by Captain [] for presentation in this country. In the heading for this write-up it stated that "CALIGULA" was born for Broadway. In the write-up itself no mention was made as to where this play would be presented.

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Confidential Informant [] advised Special Agent [] that he had noticed a circular which stated that the FRENCH AMERICAN UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE announces for the 28th of March, 1946 at 8:30 P. M. in the McMillin Theater of Columbia University, a symposium in which the following will take part: ALBERT CAMUS, THIMERAIS and VERGORS, men of letters, whose subject was to be the "CRISIS OF MANKIND", under the chairmanship of Professor JUSTIN O'BRIEN.

NY 105-960

This circular stated that the receipts would be turned over to the organization for aid to the French schools. It was requested that tickets be obtained from Mrs. A. CARO-DELAVILLE, Cultural Department of the French Embassy, 934 Fifth Avenue, New York City. This circular gave background information concerning these three individuals.

The subject was stated to have been born in Algiers in 1913, living in Algeria until 1940, where he was engaged in several professions, among them maritime broker and journalist. He left Algeria in 1940 for health reasons and since that time he has devoted himself to journalism and literature.

During the resistance movement, with several friends, he founded the clandestine newspaper "COMBAT", where he continued to write editorials up to the time of his resignation several months ago. The circular further related that he also published clandestinely "LETTRES a un AMI ALLEMAND" (Letters to a German Friend), for the CAHIERS OF THE LIBERATION, (two letters), published in their entirety recently.

His principal works were related to be:

"L'ETRANGER" (THE FOREIGNER), Novel, 1942

"LE MYTHE DE SISYPHE" (THE MYTH OF SISYPHE), Essay, 1942

"CALIGULA", Play (Playing in Paris at present)

"LE MALENTENDU" (THE MISUNDERSTOOD PERSON), Play

It was revealed that THIMERAIS was born June 19, 1900. He studied physics and mathematics and became Assistant in Physics at the University of Lausanne in 1921. He did some research in mathematics and engaged in sociological studies since 1930. The first work published by THIMERAIS was done clandestinely, in the collection of the MIDNIGHT EDITIONS, in 1943, the title being "LA PENSEE PATIENTE" (THE PATIENT THOUGHT), an essay. At the same time from 1941 to 1944, THIMERAIS belonged to the Fighting French Forces of the Interior. Since the liberation, he has directed the "CHRONIQUES DE MINUIT" (CHRONICLES OF MIDNIGHT) from a social point of view.

Other works published since "LA PENSEE PATIENTE" are:

"ELEMENTS DE DOCTRINE" (ELEMENTS OF DOCTRINE), 1 volume, extract from a work in preparation, published clandestinely

"PERMANENCE D'UNE IDEE POLITIQUE" (PERMANENCE OF A POLITICAL IDEA)

NY 105-960

As to VERCORS, it revealed that his true name is JEAN BRULLER, born in Paris on February 24, 1902. He studied at the ECOLE ALSACIENNE (ALSATIAN SCHOOL) and received his Bachelor of Science from that school in 1919. He became an Electrical Engineer in 1922, receiving an E. P. B. diploma. He finally gave up his industrial activity for drawing. He published several satirical and humorous collections which are as follows:

"21 RECETTES PRATIQUES DE MORT" (21 PRACTICAL RECIPES FOR A VIOLENT DEATH) - 1926

"HYPOTHESES SUR LES AMATEURS DE PEINTURE" (HYPOTHESES ON LOVERS OF PAINTING) - 1927

"LA DANSE DES VIVANTS" (THE DANCE OF THE LIVING) - series of prints, published in 1929

In the meantime he has published several other albums entitled:

"LA NOUVELLE CLEF DES SONGES" (THE NEW KEY TO DREAMS)

"L'ENFER" (HELL)

"LES VISIONS INTIMES ET RASSURANTES DE LA GUERRE" (INTIMATE AND REASSURING VISIONS OF THE WAR)

"SILENCES" (SILENCES)

His career as a writer began with the defeat. Under the pseudonym of VERCORS, he published "LE SILENCE DE LA MER" (THE SILENCE OF THE SEA) in the MIDNIGHT EDITIONS which he founded with PIERRE DE LESCURE.

On March 25, 1946 the United States Customs Service, who had been previously requested to advise this office of the subject's arrival in the United States, telephonically contacted the New York Field Division and advised that the subject arrived aboard the SS OREGON on that date at Pier 86, North River, New York City. He advised the United States Customs Service that he was destined to [REDACTED] b7C

On March 25, 1946 a letter was directed to the Washington Field Division requesting that stops placed with the United States Customs Service be removed inasmuch as the subject is now in the United States.

- P E N D I N G -

NY 105-960

UNDEVELOPED LEADS

NEW YORK

At New York, N. Y.:

Will continue investigation in this case with a view to ascertaining the identity of [redacted] and the subject's relationship with him. b7C

Will recontact informants in this case in an effort to ascertain the subject's future affiliations and activities.

NY 105-960

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS

The Confidential Informants mentioned in the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated April 1, 1946 at New York, are as follows:

b2

b7C

b7D

[redacted] formerly National Defense Informant [redacted] in the New York Field Division

[redacted]
[redacted]
concerning French activities in the New York area to the New York Field Division

[redacted] Former National Defense Informant [redacted] who has been discontinued as a National Defense Informant and is now a Source of Information in the New York Field Division.

These informants, who have been carried confidentially, have been so carried at their own specific request.

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

62-80405

TO : SAC, New York

DATE: June 17, 1946

FROM : Director, FBI

SUBJECT: ALBERT CAMUS, with aliases
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

Reference is made to the Bureau's letter to the New York Field Division dated February 7, 1946, requesting an investigation of the captioned individual. Reference is also made to the pending report of Special Agent [REDACTED] dated April 1, 1946, at New York City.

b7C

You are requested to complete the investigation in this matter and submit a report within the immediate future in order that the Department of State may be fully advised of the activities of this subject.

Searched _____
Serialized _____
Indexed _____
Filed _____

62-80405-12

JUN 8 1946

FILE

Long file
at New York
6/17/46
#

Read back
7/12/46
#

See me
JP

b7C

DIRECTOR



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.



IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO

FILE NUMBER _____

June 17, 1946

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO: Collectors of Customs

SUBJECT: Albert Canus, with alisaes,
P. F. Corus, Albert Camus

105-960

Reference is made to the Federal Bureau of Investigation unnumbered circular letter dated March 14, 1946 in which you were requested to notify the nearest office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the event ALBERT CAMUS should enter into or depart from the United States at a port in your district.

In view of the information received by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, it will no longer be necessary to maintain a stop notice.

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover
Director

DECLASSIFIED BY 60290/AUCBCE/DCG/JJT
ON 11-16-2004

Nyc

Stop cleared 8/13/46

105-960-13

| |
|-------------|
| FBI |
| JUN 24 1946 |
| N. Y. C. |
| ROUTED TO |

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
62-80405

DATE: July 17, 1946

TO : SAC, New York

FROM : Director, FBI

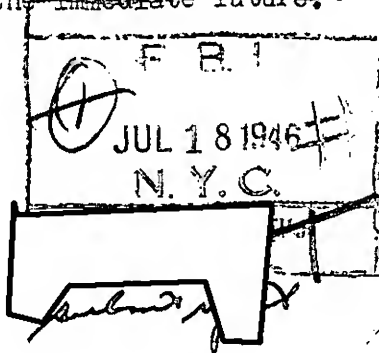
SUBJECT: ALBERT CALUS, with aliases
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

105-960

Reference is made to the Bureau's letter dated February 7, 1946, as well as the Bureau's letter dated June 17, 1946.

In view of the length of time this matter has been pending, you are instructed to give it your immediate attention and to forward the results of your inquiry to the Bureau in the immediate future.

b7C



Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

62-80405

TO : SAC, New York

DATE: August 2, 1946

get
FROM : Director, FBI

105-960

SUBJECT: ALBERT CAMUS, with aliases
SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT

Reference is made to the Bureau's letter dated February 7, 1946, as well as the Bureau's letter dated July 17, 1946 to you concerning the captioned individual.

In view of the fact that this investigation is being conducted for the State Department you should give it your immediate attention and submit the results of your investigation to the Bureau in the immediate future.

| | |
|------------|------|
| F. B. I. | |
| AUG 5 1946 | |
| N. Y. C. | |
| ROUTED TO | FILE |

105-960-15

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **NEW YORK**

NY FILE NO. 105-960 **BEO**

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| REPORT MADE AT NEW YORK | DATE WHEN MADE 8/7/46 | PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 5/4, 30, 6/12; 7/9, 23/46 | REPORT MADE BY <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 20px; margin: 5px 0;"></div> <div style="text-align: right;">b7C</div> |
| TITLE ALBERT CAMUS, with aliases: Albert Camus, P. F. Corus | | | CHARACTER OF CASE SPECIAL INQUIRY - STATE DEPARTMENT |
| <p>SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:</p> <p style="margin-left: 150px;">Investigation fails to develop any subversive or political activity on subject's part. Informants state they believe subject is striving in his lectures to establish a closer relationship between the cultural views of the U.S. and France and to explain his philosophy of the Absurd. This philosophy recommends living lucidly with the absurd, enjoying life all the more fully because it has no meaning and taking advantage of the most complete liberty on earth once eternal liberty is suppressed. Subject, due to ill health and end of lecture tour, has returned to France.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- 0 -</p> <p>REFERENCE:</p> <p style="margin-left: 150px;">Bureau File 62-80405. Report of Special Agent New York, 4/1/46. Bureau letters dated 6/17/46 and 7/17/46.</p> <p>DETAILS:</p> <p style="margin-left: 150px;">Confidential Informant advised that subject, while in New York City, was living at temporary residence. It was his opinion that upon his arrival subject stayed with for a short time and also resided with an unknown family at for another temporary period. He revealed that of the French Consulate, whose name is It is duty in the United States to foster French culture.</p> | | | |
| APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> </div> | | SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> </div> | |
| COPIES OF THIS REPORT 5 - Bureau 3 - New York | | DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> </div> | |

NY 105-960

Informant related that he recently read an article in the New York Herald Tribune by Professor JUSTIN O'BRIEN, of the Department of Romance Languages of Columbia University, concerning CAMUS. In this article O'BRIEN referred to the subject as the boldest writer in France today and called him a novelist, dramatist, and philosopher of the absurd. Herein he related that ever since subject and PASCAL PIA had founded the clandestine newspaper "COMBAT" to mock the German and Vichy censors, ALBERT CAMUS editorials have been distinguished for their clairvoyance and directness. After the liberation of France CAMUS' newspaper came into the open and took its place as the most vigorous in Paris. At this time subject became the spokesman of the "pure resistance" group. The article went on to state that in literature CAMUS is an independent who, recognizing the absurdity of human life borne of the conflict between man's eternal longing for a logical explanation of the universe and the complete irrationality of life, recommends rather living lucidly within the absurd, enjoying life all the more fully because it has no meaning, and taking advantage of the most complete liberty on earth once eternal liberty is suppressed. His attitude is tantamount to a permanent state of revolt against the absurdity of life. The absurd man lives more freely by refusing nothing and by remaining painfully lucid in the face of life's irrationality.

Confidential Informant [redacted] whose identity is known to the Bureau, revealed that subject came to the United States to lecture in colleges on the east coast while on a speaking tour in an effort to promote his philosophy of the absurd and to strengthen French culture in the United States. Informant did not know how long this tour would take or how long CAMUS would remain in the United States. He stated, however, that he has ascertained that subject is one of the three most brilliant names in contemporary French literature, the others being THIMERAIS and VERCORS.

Informant revealed that subject had spoken on the "Crisis of Mankind" at the MC MILLIN THEATER of Columbia University during the month of April. In his talk he called the crisis "the use of consecutive terrors to a perversion of values so that a man and a historic force are no longer judged according to the function of their dignity, but according to their success." Subject revealed that the characteristic of this crisis is the desire for power brought about by fear, the replacement of real man by the political and historical man, the reign of abstractions and fatality, and solitude without a future. He stated that these different aspects can only be solved by removing the world from the congestion of terror and rejecting all forms of realistic and fatalistic thought, to give politics a secondary place and to keep it entirely out of the philosophic and moral domain, to reconcile pessimistic thought and an optimistic section, and finally to create a universalism. Subject concluded by stating that if this is

NY 105-960

done the world will then become a world of men and women, productive work, and reflective leisure.

Informant stated that during the two years preceding the liberation of France subject wrote extensively for underground newspapers and reviews, for "COMBAT" and also for the REVIEW LIBRE and CAHIERS DE LA LIBERATION. It was informant's sincere belief that certain pieces that subject did for these papers constituted one of the most important contributions to "resistance writing". He also stated that in an article he had read concerning subject he found subject described as follows: the philosophical point of departure of subject's philosophy is a noble, courageous, but resolutely atheistic humanism, that all his literary production is heavy with despair, not facile, adolescent despair, but the anguished perception that man is a stranger, alone and helpless in an absurd world.

Informant revealed that in a recent issue of FRANCE AMERIQUE he had noted that subject gave a series of lectures in April at Harvard University, Wellesley College, the French Institute, and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. According to informant, subject's lectures merely intended to show France's cultural attitude so as to foster a closer relationship between the culture of France and the United States and also to express his philosophy of the absurd man.

It was noted in the April 20, 1946 issue of the French newspaper LA VICTOIRE that subject's contemporaries THIMERAIS and VERCORS had already gone back to France.

It was further noted that in the May 19, 1946 issue of FRANCE AMERIQUE the following information was contained concerning the subject's lecture at Brooklyn College on May 1, 1946, which information is being quoted from that issue:

"On May 1st, 1946 Brooklyn College celebrated its second annual French Day. The college inaugurated its French Day in the autumn of 1944, shortly after the Liberation. This year by chance the celebration came on the 1st of May, the day of the May Lily and of the workers. Thanks to the kindness of the Cultural Bureau of the French Embassy, the college had the great privilege of welcoming ALBERT CAMUS. The president of the college, Mr. HARRY D. GIDEONSE, made a short speech on France, a country which he knows so well and which he loves. He told the students and teachers who had assembled there that for him France was the country of quality and not of quantity and that he hoped that she would

NY 105-960

"continue to play her traditional role, etc.

"..... ALBERT CAMUS had just finished his tour of the universities and the colleges of the East; Brooklyn College was his last stop. He told the students his impressions of the youth of America with whom he had had occasion to speak and to have discussions during his tour. According to CAMUS, young people are the same all over the world. He expected to find the youth of America, however, more excitable than they really were, he said. Man's greatest temptation, said CAMUS, is inertia. The ordinary man feels that if he does his job well, he is discharging all his responsibilities. But it is not enough to do one's job. Youth must take part in the struggle, for the world will be saved by this generation or else it will not be saved. The problems and the doubts of American youth are the same as those of the youth of Europe. There are no longer any national problems; there are only international problems. There is especially 'a solidarity due to misfortune'. If we no longer accept the principle of might, we must fight incessantly and passionately. Otherwise the world is lost. One must have compassion for one's fellow creatures.

"Mr. CAMUS spoke of pessimism and optimism. European pessimism believes that all of life is a tragedy and American optimism sees all of life as good and marvelous. A synthesis of American optimism and of the pessimism of the youth of France must be made. It is necessary to bring about solidarity and sympathy between the two countries and also to find signs of compassion for mankind. This synthesis between optimism and pessimism is what CAMUS calls a classical civilization. It is necessary to build on the basis of a United States of the world which has not been able to be accomplished on a juridical basis. Hope for a better world can be brought about by closer ties between American students and French students. Americans students should send food to their French comrades, they should exchange letters, and it is even more important, when material conditions become better, thousands of American students should be sent to France and thousands of French students should be sent to America, so that there could be an uninterrupted stream of exchange students between the youth of the two countries.

"At the close of his lecture, Mr. CAMUS offered to answer questions. Naturally, he was asked if he was an existentialist. He answered that he was not, because existentialism claims that it can answer all the problems of this world which is impossible for a single philosophy and that besides he wished to have the freedom to say yes as well as no."

Under a suitable pretext it was ascertained through the French

NY 105-960

newspaper FRANCE AMERIQUE, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York City; the FRENCH PRESS AND INFORMATION SERVICE, 501 Madison Avenue, New York City; and the FRENCH CULTURAL SERVICE IN THE U. S., which is located at the French Consulate, that CAMUS, due to ill health and the completion of his tour, returned to France some time between the first and the fourteenth of June, 1946.

b7C

[redacted] at the French Consulate, was contacted on July 23, 1946 under pretext and revealed that subject returned to France several weeks ago due to the completion of his lectures here, which numbered approximately five or six in all.

The investigation in instant case failed to develop any subversive or political activity on the part of the subject.

C L O S E D

NY 105-960

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANT

The Confidential Informant mentioned in the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated August 7, 1946 at New York, N. Y. is as follows:

b2

b7C

b7D

[redacted] [redacted] formerly National Defense Informant [redacted] in the New York Field Division.

SAC, NEW YORK

5/15/58

SAC, PHILADELPHIA

SPANISH REFUGEE AID
IS - C

ALBERT CAMUS
IS - C

This office has received by mail a letter from [redacted] in which she encloses solicitation for assistance for the Spanish Refugee Aid. Correspondence appears to have emanated with ALBERT CAMUS who utilizes stationery captioned, "ALBERT CAMUS, Paris, France" but uses the return address of ALBERT CAMUS, Spanish Refugee Aid, 80 East 11th Street, New York 3, New York. The correspondence from CAMUS, its enclosures, and the mailing envelope are forwarded herewith to New York for any investigative value that it might have. A copy to Newark is for information purposes since [redacted] resides in [redacted]. Her letter has been acknowledged by Philadelphia. Philadelphia indices contain references which may be identical to [redacted] and CAMUS but do not appear pertinent to the current correspondence.

2 - NY (Encls 5) (RM)
1 - NK (RM)
1 - FA (100-0)

WSH:omc

(4)

100-118016
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
MAY 16 1958
FBI - NEW YORK

STRICT INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

THIRD NAVAL DISTRICT

FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING

90 CHURCH STREET

NEW YORK 7, N. Y.

DATE: 1 Oct 60

CASE NO: PRNC-511

Subj: [REDACTED]

ASSIGNED TO: [REDACTED] b7C

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

TO: G-2, 1st ARMY

BCI

- STATE POLICE

- CREDIT BUREAU

FBI- NY

USAF(OSI)

SSD

ORR

BI

OinC ZONE NO. _____

Gentlemen:

In connection with an official investigation it is requested that a search be made of your files concerning the individual described below, and that this office be advised of the results thereof. If derogatory information is found, please furnish date of birth or other positively identifying data.

1. NAMES & ALIASES CAMUS, Albert

2. BIRTH: DATE: _____

PLACE: _____

3. DESCRIPTION SEX: _____

COLOR: _____

HGT. _____

FT. _____

IN. _____

WT. _____

EYES: _____

HAIR: _____

SCARS: _____

SOC. SEC. NO: _____

4. HOME ADDRESSES: (No. & Street) _____

(City & State) _____

(Date) _____

80 East 11th Street

New York, N.Y.

Present

5. EMPLOYMENT: (Firm) _____

(Location) _____

(Dates) _____

6. REFERENCES: (For Zone Officers) _____

7. COMMENTS:

(Use reverse side if necessary)

BACKGROUND

DATE DUE: _____

FILE STRIPPED

BY: [REDACTED]

105-960-18
PRIORITY-URGENT-ROUTINE

SEARCHED INDEXED

SERIALIZED FILED

OCT 7 1960

1. Article entitled "French Existentialism" which appeared in the Feb. 23, 1946 issue of "The Nation". See serial 8.
2. Article copied from May 19, 1946 issue of "France-Amerique" re lecture of subject, ALBERT CAMUS, at Brooklyn College on May 1, 1946. See serial 14.

103-960-14
SERIAL 14
MAY 19 1946
ROUTED TO
FILE

FRANCE-AMERIQUE
May 19, 1946
Page 9

trans
orig
5/24
b7C

ALBERT CAMUS AT BROOKLYN COLLEGE

11
On May 1st, 1946, Brooklyn College celebrated its second annual "French Day". The college inaugurated its "French Day" in the autumn of 1944, shortly after the Liberation. This year by chance the celebration came on the 1st of May, the day of the May lily and of the workers. Thanks to the kindness of the Cultural Bureau of the French Embassy, the college had the great privilege of welcoming Albert Camus. The president of the college, Mr. Harry D. Gideonse made a short speech on France, a country which he knows so well and which he loves. He told the students and teachers who had assembled there that for him France was the country of quality and not of quantity and that he hoped that she would continue to play her traditional role, etc.

17
.....Albert Camus had just finished his tour of the universities and the colleges of the East; Brooklyn College was his last stop. He told the students his impressions of the youth of America with whom he had had occasion to speak and to have discussions during his tour. According to Camus, young people are the same all over the world. He expected to find the youth of America, however, more excitable than they really were, he said. Man's greatest temptation, said Camus, is inertia. The ordinary man feels that if he does his job well, he is discharging all his responsibilities. But it is not enough to do one's job. Youth must take part in the struggle, for the world will be saved by this generation or else it will not be saved. The problems and the doubts of American youth are the same as those of the youth of Europe. There are no longer any national problems; there are only international problems. There is especially "a solidarity due to misfortune". If we no longer accept the principle of might, we must fight incessantly and passionately. Otherwise, the world is lost. One must have compassion for one's fellow creatures.

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105-765-122

that there could be an uninterrupted stream of exchange students between the youth of the two countries.

At the close of his lecture, Mr. Camus offered to answer questions. Naturally, he was asked if he was an existentialist. He answered that he was not, because existentialism claims that it can answer all the problems of this world which is impossible for a single philosophy and ~~that besides~~, he wished to have the freedom to say yes as well as no.

Mr. Camus' speech was heard very enthusiastically. It was followed by a piano solo, etc.

~~The students and teachers will retain a delightful memory of the lecture of Albert Camus.~~

Translator: Sophia Yukn

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

b7C

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Date Received.....

From.....
(Name of contributor)

(Address of

By.....
(Name of Special Agent)

To Be Returned (Yes ()
No ())

Description:

File No. 105-101-142

BOOKS and the ARTS

FRENCH EXISTENTIALISM

BY HANNAH ARENDT

A LECTURE on philosophy provokes a riot, with hundreds crowding in and thousands turned away. Books on philosophical problems preaching no cheap creed and offering no panacea but, on the contrary, so difficult as to require actual thinking sell like detective stories. Plays in which the action is a matter of words, not of plot, and which offer a dialogue of reflections and ideas run for months and are attended by enthusiastic crowds. Analyses of the situation of man in the world, of the fundamentals of human relationship, of Being and the Void not only give rise to a new literary movement but also figure as possible guides for a fresh political orientation. Philosophers become newspapermen, playwrights, novelists. They are not members of university faculties but "bohemians" who stay at hotels and live in the cafe—leading a public life to the point of renouncing privacy. And not even success, or so it seems, can turn them into respectable bores.

This is what is happening, from all reports, in Paris. If the Resistance has not achieved the European revolution, it seems to have brought about, at least in France, a genuine rebellion of the intellectuals, whose docility in relation to modern society was one of the saddest aspects of the sad spectacle of Europe between wars. And the French people, for the time being, appear to consider the arguments of their philosophers more important than the talk and the quarrels of their politicians. This may reflect, of course, a desire to escape from political action into some theory which merely talks about action, that is, into activism; but it may also signify that in the face of the spiritual bankruptcy of the left and the sterility of the old revolutionary élite—which have led to the desperate efforts at restoration of all political parties—more people than we might imagine have a feeling that the responsibility for political action is too heavy to assume until new foundations, ethical as well as political, are laid down, and that the old tradition of philosophy which is deeply imbedded even in the least philosophical individual is actually an impediment to new political thought.

The name of the new movement is "Existentialism," and its chief exponents are Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, but the term Existentialism has given rise to so many misunderstandings that Camus has already publicly stated why he is "not an Existentialist." The term comes from the modern German philosophy which had a revival immediately after the First World War and has strongly influenced French thought for more than a decade; but it would be irrelevant to trace and define the sources of Existentialism in national terms for the simple reason that both the German and the French manifestations came out of an identical period and a more or less identical cultural heritage.

The French Existentialists, though they differ widely

among themselves, are united on two main lines of rebellion: first, the rigorous repudiation of what they call the *esprit sérieux*; and, second, the angry refusal to accept the world as it is as the natural, predestined milieu of man.

L'esprit sérieux, which is the original sin according to the new philosophy, may be equated with respectability. The "serious" man is one who thinks of himself as president of his business, as a member of the Legion of Honor, as a member of the faculty, but also as father, as husband, or as any other half-natural, half-social function. For by so doing he agrees to the identification of himself with an arbitrary function which society has bestowed. *L'esprit sérieux* is the very negation of freedom, because it leads man to agree to and accept the necessary deformation which every human being must undergo when he is fitted into society. Since everyone knows well enough in his own heart that he is not identical with his function, *l'esprit sérieux* indicates also bad faith in the sense of pretending. Kafka has already shown, in "Amerika," how ridiculous and dangerous is the hollow dignity which grows out of identifying oneself with one's function: In that book the most dignified person in the hotel, upon whose word the hero's job and daily bread depend, rules out the possibility that he can make an error by invoking the argument of the "serious" man: "How could I go on being the head porter if I mistook one person for another?"

This matter of *l'esprit sérieux* was first touched upon in Sartre's novel "La Nausée," in a delightful description of a gallery of portraits of the town's respectable citizens, *les salauds*. It then became the central topic of Camus's novel "L'Étranger." The hero of the book, the stranger, is an average man who simply refuses to submit to the serious-mindedness of society, who refuses to live as any of his allotted functions. He does not behave as a son at his mother's funeral—he does not weep; he does not behave as a husband—he declines to take marriage seriously even at the moment of his engagement. Because he does not pretend, he is a stranger whom no one understands, and he pays with his life for his affront to society. Since he refuses to play the game, he is isolated from his fellow-men to the point of incomprehensibility and isolated from himself to the point of becoming inarticulate. Only in a last scene, immediately before his death, does the hero arrive at some kind of explanation which conveys the impression that for him life itself was such a mystery and in its terrible way so beautiful that he did not see any necessity for "improving" upon it with the trimmings of good behavior and hollow pretensions.

Sartre's brilliant play "Huis Clos" belongs to the same category. The play opens in hell, appropriately furnished in the style of the Second Empire. The three persons gathered in the room—"Hell is the Others"—set the diabolical tor-

105-950-700

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Post-War Planning in Sweden

THOUGH fortunate enough to remain unscathed by war, Sweden for nearly six years lived under the threat of invasion and consequently was forced to give defense a top priority in its budget. It maintained large forces under arms and diverted a good part of its national resources to building planes, warships, tanks, and other weapons. As a result, the national debt was quadrupled, even though taxes were raised steeply and new social reforms had to be postponed.

Now Sweden is once again able to add to its long record of progressive legislation. The coalition government which held office during the time of national peril has been replaced by a Social Democratic administration, commanding a majority in the *Riksdag*, with a program of constructive economic planning. Early in January the budget, introduced by Ernst Wigforss, Minister of Finance, revealed some of the government's plans. For the fiscal year beginning July 1 ordinary expenditures and revenues are expected to balance at about \$814,000,000, and no supplementary military budget will be necessary, as it has been during the war years. However, taxation is to be maintained at war-time levels partly as an antidote to inflation, which Sweden must guard against so long as, in common with the whole world, it has to cope with a shortage of goods. But there is another reason for maintaining the flow of revenue, and that is to build up funds for new social benefits. The revenues that for years have been spent on armaments are to be used for increasing old-age pensions, hitherto little more than token payments. Now it is proposed to pay aged couples up to \$600 a year. Other plans call for increased social distribution of national income in the form of free meals for school children and paid vacations for underprivileged housewives—recognition of a group whose contribution to national welfare is usually overlooked.

Sweden, for a good many years, has engaged in the business-like practice of setting up two budgets. The running expenses of government are provided for in the ordinary budget and are normally covered by taxes; revenue-producing expenditures, on the other hand, are grouped in a separate capital budget and amortized over a period of years. In the next fiscal year the capital budget will amount to about \$167,500,000, compared with \$92,750,000 in the current year. It will cover new investments in the railroads, public utilities, and other publicly owned undertakings and, to the extent of \$62,500,000, credits to war-ravaged countries.

A capital budget of this kind is an essential tool for a planned economy. It provides a means of maintaining a balance between savings and investment, of checking booms which threaten to get out of hand, and of offsetting the deflationary effects of a fall in private capital expenditures. "The economic power of the state," declares the Program of the Swedish Labor Movement—a joint production of the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions—"ought in

everybody's interest to be applied so as to give that support to the national economy which is needed in order to maintain a permanent and stable state of high business activity. The incomes of the community must be made so high, and made so secure, that demand does not slacken. In order to stimulate enterprises, the interest rate must be kept as low as possible. In addition, there must be a public coordinating body to insure that capital is employed so as to utilize fully for useful ends both labor and the material means of production."

To achieve these objectives, the Swedish government is not content to rely wholly on budgetary and other controls. Consideration is therefore being given to public ownership of a number of industries which, it is felt, are not being conducted efficiently by private enterprise. Examples are insurance, which under private management is thought to have assumed certain monopoly characteristics; stone quarrying, an industry suffering from obsolescent methods and needing new capital, new machinery, and new marketing methods; and the refining and distribution of oil and gasoline, now dominated by the big Anglo-American trusts. The last of these industries has already been investigated by a committee whose report asserts that prices have been held at too high a level by the oil monopoly and suggests means by which the distribution system could be simplified.

While the Swedish government is proceeding cautiously, allowing time for inquiry and discussion and showing no doctrinaire disposition to pursue socialization for its own sake, its plans have naturally aroused antagonism in business circles. What may be more surprising to those American conservatives who regard consumer cooperation as a form of communism is the strong opposition that has developed in the powerful Swedish cooperative movement. A few days ago I had an opportunity to discuss this question with Albin Johansson, head of the Kooperativa Förbundet (KF), the great Swedish cooperative organization. He said, in effect, that his movement fully approved of government ownership of railroads, public utilities, and other "natural" monopolies but was against the creation of monopolies, either public or private, in consumer goods or in the provision of such services as insurance. In these fields he thought that a strong cooperative movement, able to challenge private trusts by setting up "yardstick" enterprises as KF had done in the case of electric lamps, margarine, rubber shoes, and other products, was a better safeguard for the public than nationalized enterprises that were apt to become bureaucratic.

In the case of oil, the Swedish cooperatives have already their own distribution system, which they are planning to expand greatly. To this end they are negotiating with the Consumers' Cooperative Association of Kansas City, which operates a large integrated oil enterprise, to obtain direct supplies making them independent of the trusts. Hence, while they think some government control of the oil trade is justified, they feel that scope should be left for an organization such as theirs. Since the membership of the Swedish cooperatives overlaps to a considerable extent that of the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions, the government is bound to give full consideration to these views. But either way prospects for Standard Oil and Royal Dutch-Shell in Sweden seem rather dim. KEITH HUTCHISON

be in itself, is nevertheless due to the quality of the work. It is also due to a definite modernity of attitude which does not try to hide the depth of the break in Western tradition. Camus especially has the courage not even to look for connections, for predecessors and the like. The good thing about Sartre and Camus is that they apparently suffer no longer from nostalgia for the good old days, even though they may know that in an abstract sense those days were actually better than ours. They do not believe in the magic of the old, and they are honest in that they make no compromises whatever.

Yet if the revolutionary élan of these writers is not broken by success, if, symbolically speaking, they stick to their hotel rooms and their cafes, the time may come when it will be necessary to point out "seriously" those aspects of their philosophy which indicate that they are still dangerously involved in old concepts. The nihilistic elements, which are obvious in spite of all protests to the contrary, are not the consequences of new insights but of some very old ideas.

THREE POEMS

BY ROBERT LOWELL

Rebellion

There was rebellion, Father, when the mock
French windows slammed and you hove backwards, rammed
Into your heirlooms, screens, a glass-cased clock,
The highboy quaking to its toes, and damned
My arm that cast your house upon your head
And broke its flintlock on your skull. The dead
Caught at my knees and fell:
And it was well
With me, my Father. Then
Behemoth and Leviathan
Devoured our mighty merchants. None could arm
Or put to sea. O Father, on my farm
I added field to field
And I have sealed
An everlasting pact
With Dives to contract
The world that spreads in pain;
My bondsmen, having had their fill,
No longer line the ditch at Bunker Hill
Where the clubbed muskets broke the redcoat's brain.

The North Sea Undertaker's Complaint

Now south and south and south the mallard heads,
His green-blue bony hood echoes the green
Shutters of Gray Rock, and the mussel beds
Are sluggish where the webbed feet spanked the lean
Eel grass to tinder in the take-off. South
Is what I think of. It seems yesterday
I slid my hearse across the river mouth
And pitched the first iced mouse into the hay.
Thirty below, it is. I hear the dumb
Club-footed orphan ring the Angelus
And clank the bell-chain for St. Gertrude's choir
To wail with the dead bell the martyrdom
Of two more parish priests, the phosphorous
Shriveled to glory when they babbled fire.

Where the Rainbow Ends

I saw the sky descending, black and white
Not blue, on Boston where the winters wore
The skulls to jack o'lanterns on the slates
And Hunger's skin-and-bone retrievers tore
The chickadee and shrike. The thorn tree waits
Its victim and tonight
The worms will eat the deadwood to the foot
Of Ararat: the scythers, Time and Death,
Helméd locusts, move upon the tree of breath;
The wild ingrafted olive and the root

Are withered, and a winter drifts to where
The Pepperpot, ironic rainbow, spans
Charles River and its scales of scorched-earth miles,
The tree-dabbed suburb where construction mans
The wrath of God. About the Chapel, piles
Of dead leaves char the air
And I am a red arrow on this graph
Of revelations. Every dove is sold,
The Chapel's sharp-shinned eagle shifts its hold
On Serpent-Time, the Rainbow's epitaph.

In Boston serpents whistle at the cold.
The victim climbs the altar steps and sings:
"Hosannah to the lion, lamb and beast
Who fans the furnace fire of Is with wings:
I breathe the ether of my marriage feast."
At the high altar, gold
And a fair cloth. I kneel and the wings beat
My cheek. What can the Dove of Jesus give
You now but wisdom, exile? Stand and live,
The dove has brought an olive branch to eat.

THOMAS PAINE, Rationalist

BY PERRY MILLER

TODAY it is unnecessary to defend Tom Paine against Theodore Roosevelt's accusation, "filthy little atheist." Historians and biographers have at last impressed upon our generation the long-forgotten fact that "The Age of Reason," from which Paine's fame as an "infidel" sprang, was actually the work of a pious deist. Yet it remains a significant commentary on Paine's career that for a century after his death Americans charged him with infidelity on the strength of a book he wrote in the pathetic hope of arresting the progress of atheism in France of the Terror. His simple confidence that mere rational persuasion could curb the unleashed furies of the Revolution was roundly refuted by the Jacobins who condemned him to prison. The irony of his subsequent reputation shows how Paine was victimized by his place in history; he had the misfortune to be the most fervent of rationalists at the very moment when rationalism of the eighteenth-century variety was going down before the rush of an entirely new kind of fervor.

Undoubtedly it was his reputed infidelity that caused nineteenth-century America to forget his services in the War of Independence. When he returned to America in 1802, political machinations were again to challenge his faith in the

ture in motion by trying to pretend. Since, however, their lives are closed and since "you are your life and nothing else," pretense no longer works, and we see what would go on behind closed doors if people actually were stripped of the sheltering cover of functions derived from society.

Both Sartre's play and Camus's novel deny the possibility of a genuine fellowship between men, of any relationship which would be direct, innocent, free of pretense. Love in Sartre's philosophy is the will to be loved, the need for a supreme confirmation of one's own existence. For Camus love is a somewhat awkward and hopeless attempt to break through the isolation of the individual.

The way out of pretense and serious-mindedness is to play, at being what one really is. Again Kafka indicated in the last chapter of "Amerika" a new possibility of authentic life. The great "Nature Theater" where everyone is welcome and where everybody's unhappiness is resolved is not by accident: a theater. Here everybody is invited to choose his role, to play at what he is or would like to be. The chosen role is the solution of the conflict between mere functioning and mere being, as well as between mere ambition and mere reality.

The new "ideal" becomes, in this context, the actor whose very profession is pretending, who constantly changes his role, and thus can never take any of his roles seriously. By playing at what one is, one guards one's freedom as a human being from the pretenses of one's functions; moreover, only by playing at what he really is, is man able to affirm that he is never identical with himself as a thing is identical with itself. An inkpot is always an inkpot. Man is his life and his actions, which are never finished until the very moment of his death. He *is* his existence.

The second common element of French Existentialism, the insistence upon the basic homelessness of man in the world, is the topic of Camus's "Le Mythe de Sisyphe; essai sur l'absurde," and of Sartre's "La Nausée." For Camus man is essentially the stranger because the world in general and man as man are not fitted for each other; that they are together in existence makes the human condition an absurdity. Man is the only "thing" in the world which obviously does not belong in it, for only man does not exist simply as a man among men in the way animals exist among animals and trees among trees—all of which necessarily exist, so to speak, in the plural. Man is basically alone with his "revolt" and his "clairvoyance," that is, with his reasoning, which makes him ridiculous because the gift of reason was bestowed upon him in a world "where everything is given and nothing ever explained."

Sartre's notion of the absurdity, the contingency, of existence is best represented in the chapter of "La Nausée" which appears in the current issue of the *Partisan Review* under the title The Root of the Chestnut Tree. Whatever exists, so far as we can see, has not the slightest reason for its existence. It is simply *de trop*, superfluous. The fact that I can't even imagine a world in which, instead of many too many things, there would be nothing only shows the hopelessness and senselessness of man's being eternally entangled in existence.

Here Sartre and Camus part company, if we may judge from the few works of theirs which have reached this country. The absurdity of existence and the repudiation of *l'esprit*

sérieux are only points of departure for each. Camus seems to have gone on to a philosophy of absurdity, whereas Sartre seems to be working toward some new positive philosophy and even a new humanism.

Camus has probably protested against being called an Existentialist because for him the absurdity does not lie in man as such or in the world as such but only in their being thrown together. Since man's life, being laid in the world, is absurd, it must be lived as absurdity—lived, that is, in a kind of proud defiance which insists on reason despite the experience of reason's failure to explain anything; insists on despair since man's pride will not allow him the hope of discovering a sense he cannot figure out by means of reason; insists, finally, that reason and human dignity, in spite of their senselessness, remain the supreme values. The absurd life then consists in constantly rebelling against all its conditions and in constantly refusing consolations. "This revolt is the price of life. Spread over the whole of an existence, it restores its grandeur." All that remains, all that one can say yes to, is chance itself, the *hazard roi* which has apparently played at putting man and world together. "I judge that everything is well," said Oedipus, and this word is sacred. It resounds in the ferocious universe which is the limit of man. . . . It makes of destiny an affair of men which should be settled among men." This is precisely the point where Camus, without giving much explanation, leaves behind all modernistic attitudes and comes to insights which are genuinely modern, the insight, for instance, that the moment may have arrived "when creation is no longer taken tragically; it is only taken seriously."

For Sartre, absurdity is of the essence of things as well as of man. Anything that exists is absurd simply because it exists. The salient difference between the things of the world and the human being is that things are unequivocally identical with themselves, whereas man—because he sees and knows that he sees, believes and knows that he believes—bears within his consciousness a negation which makes it impossible for him ever to become one with himself. In this single respect—in respect of his consciousness, which has the germ of negation in it—man is a creator. For this is of man's own making and not merely given, as the world and his existence are given. If man becomes aware of his own consciousness and its tremendous creative possibilities, and renounces the longing to be identical with himself as a thing is, he realizes that he depends upon nothing and nobody outside himself and that he can be free, the master of his own destiny. This seems to be the essential meaning of Sartre's novel "Les Mouches" ("The Flies"), in which Orestes, by taking upon himself the responsibility for the necessary killing of which the town is afraid, liberates the town and takes the Flies—the Erinyes of bad conscience and of the dark fear of revenge—with him. He himself is immune because he does not feel guilty and regrets nothing.

It would be a cheap error to mistake this new trend in philosophy and literature for just another fashion of the day because its exponents refuse the respectability of institutions and do not even pretend to that seriousness which regards every achievement as a step in a career. Nor should we be put off by the loud journalistic success with which their work has been accompanied. This success, equivocal as it may

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